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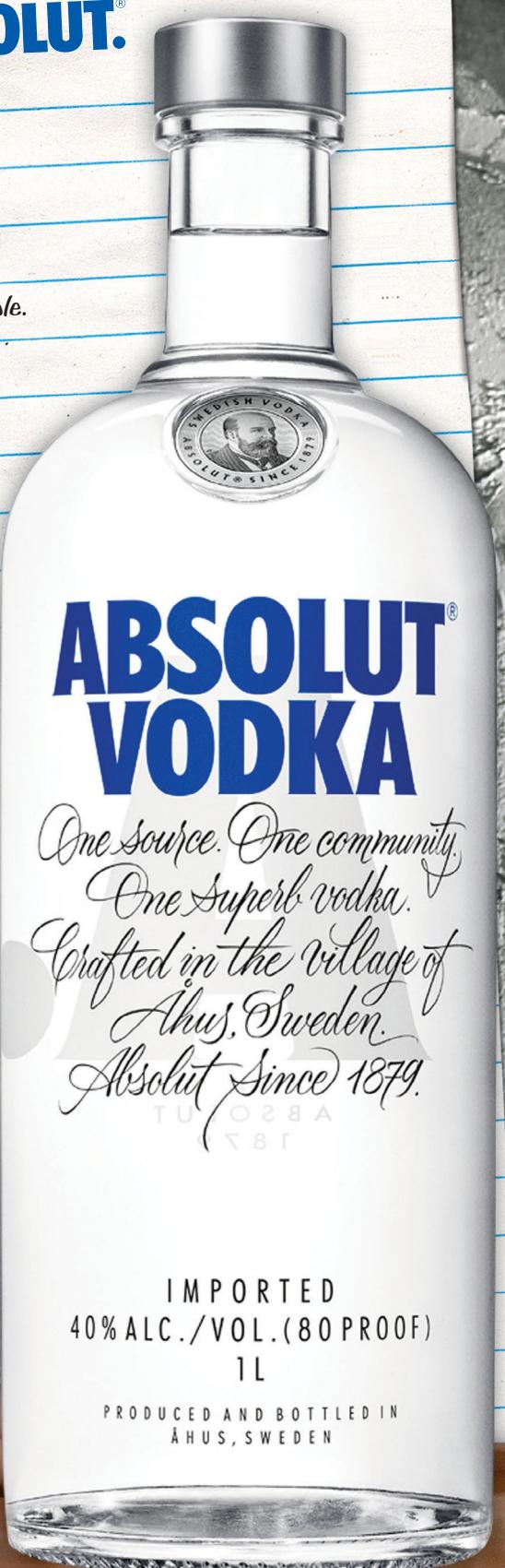
BEST HANGOVER CURE: Sex and pancakes. In that order.

STRANGEST DRINK REQUEST: Ginger wine. It doesn't exist as far as I'm concerned.

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BARTENDER
OF THE WEEK

Brian



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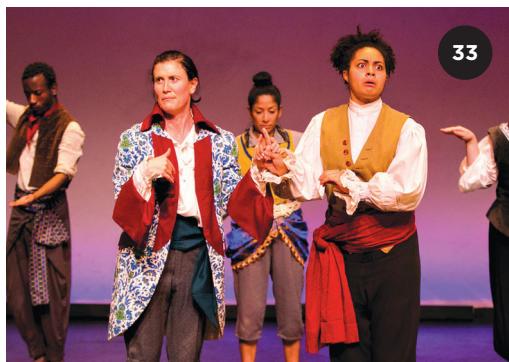
CITY PAGES

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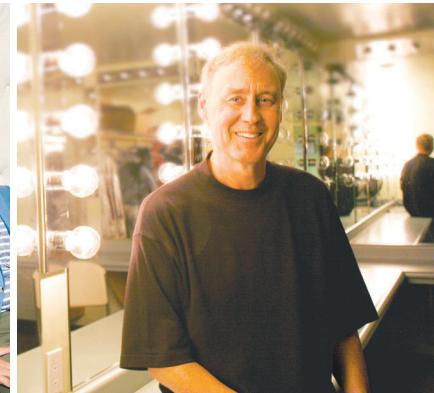


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THE SHORTLIST

Is Lake Elmo trying to bulldoze a family farm for more housing?
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VIKARUS

THE STAT SHEET

Income inequality explained in four easy steps:

70

Percentage of cuts in the Republican tax plan that will go to business, mostly large corporations

60

Percentage of Americans who believe corporate taxes should be raised, not lowered, according to a Politico poll

0

Percentage of savings going to the bottom 35 percent of individual earners

\$3.15 billion

Total amount spent lobbying Congress last year, explaining why the views of those 60 percent don't matter

"After giving the rich guy a \$1.2 billion stadium and all the money from the suites, what's another \$24 million between friends?"

Reader Steven P. Singleton responds to "Law-suit: Downtown Minneapolis park not just a 'terrible deal,' but illegal too," at citypages.com

THANKSGRUBBING

AS AMERICA'S national day of gratitude nears, Target announced plans to celebrate Thanksgiving by torturing its workers, opening stores from 6 p.m. to midnight.

The plan isn't as bad as Walmart's, which requires employees to work a split shift early in the morning, then return by late afternoon for the sales to begin. But Target is trying to frame the move as a matter of grace, claiming it's merely accommodating "guests who make Black Friday shopping part of their Thanksgiving tradition."

Because nothing says tradition quite like buying junk that could be purchased any other day of the year.

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How Minneapolis became ground zero for a **LIBERAL UPRISING**

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BARNEY LAKNER, who once terrorized Ely campers, now charged with rape

Ignored on **TINDER**, Minnesota college student tells woman 'I kinda hope you get raped'

A HUNT IN MEXICO

Former Varsity Theater owner hit with child sex abuse judgment

Jason McLean, the former owner of Varsity Theater and Loring Pasta Bar in Minneapolis, has been ordered to pay \$2.5 million to one of five women suing him for sexual abuse perpetrated during McLean's years as a teacher with the Children's Theatre Company.

The judgment is almost identical to the \$2.51 million McLean sold the theater for back in July. The theater had gone dark in the wake of allegations that McLean was a serial abuser of underage girls he'd taught. In August, McLean sold Loring Pasta Bar to a group of former managers and employees.

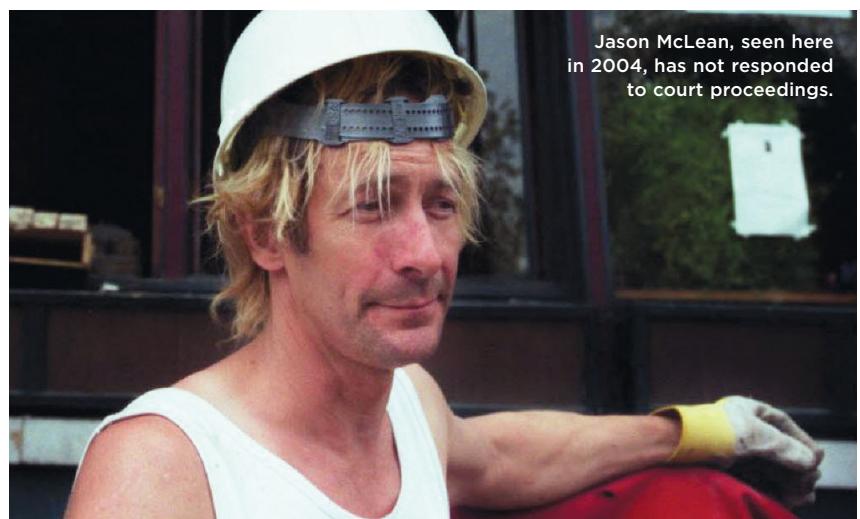
But signs don't point to any willingness from McLean to sign over the money he netted from those sales. He has avoided participating in this case, ducking a deposition scheduled for August and refusing to respond to court filings.

In his order for a default judgment in favor of the victim, Hennepin County Judge

Frank Magill wrote of McLean's "complete disregard for the legal process.... Defendant has failed to follow the rules of discovery and the Court's orders repeatedly and without excuse. Defendant has failed to appear at numerous hearings and has filed nothing for months."

McLean is now believed to be living in the Baja California region of Mexico. A U.S. citizen living there has filed an affidavit stating he has "first-hand information" that McLean "is currently in the process" of buying a place in Cabo San Lucas valued at more than \$1 million.

More like \$1.5 million, according to attorney Jeff Anderson, who is representing five women who say McLean abused them. After fleeing Minnesota, McLean spent time in Oakland, California, where he still owns a restaurant called Small Wonder—formerly called the Loring Cafe—before moving on to Mexico.



Jason McLean, seen here in 2004, has not responded to court proceedings.

RICHARD TSONG-TAATARII, STAR TRIBUNE

According to the affidavit on McLean's recent business dealings, he informed the owner of a hotel property he had \$1.4 million in cash. That owner, who later learned of the allegations against McLean after searching his name online, believes McLean later purchased a large seaside house, which has in the past been rented out for weddings and private parties.

During his negotiations, McLean had

said it was "important that the property McLean purchase be a property that generates income."

Says Anderson: "We are concerned that McLean still continues to pose a serious risk of harm, and we will continue to do whatever it takes to make him accountable to the women he harmed as children, even if it means chasing him to the ends of the earth." —MIKE MULLEN

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Suspending Belief

A harassment case at St. Olaf exposes the thorny state of campus politics

After one day at St. Olaf College, Cosimo Pori was enchanted.

The high schooler, who grew up in Albuquerque, was told by a friend who'd visited St. Olaf that the school might be a good fit.

The friend was right. St. Olaf's campus in Northfield was beautiful, and Pori was impressed with the performing arts program. People seemed so open, so friendly.

"Minnesota Nice" and the Midwestern hospitality... at first, I was kind of under its spell."

Pori—who is gender non-binary and uses "they/their/them" pronouns—became active in dance, an LGBTQ group, and student government.

This experience was similar in many ways to that of Griffin Edwards, an Ole from southern California, who liked the school's emphasis on music and its "quirky" side. Edwards, who describes his politics as "center-right, pragmatic libertarian," knew he'd be outnumbered at St. Olaf, but appreciated the school's spirit of free speech.

Yet the 2016 elections were a flashpoint for Edwards, who says conservative students were castigated as villains in a "hostile atmosphere." Pori also saw hostility after November 8, awakening to a new president who spoke a "violent, dangerous" language about blacks, Muslims, immigrants, and queers.

Those views collided last March, when Edwards penned an op-ed piece for the Manitou Messenger. He opposed a student group's speaking invitation to Angela Davis, a leftist activist and academic whose presence only upheld St. Olaf's "dominant campus narrative," he wrote.

Where were the speakers of other stripes? "The American political sphere has Democrats, Republicans, communists, libertarians, Nazis, evangelicals, Greens and even monarchists," he wrote. Cosimo Pori recalls reading Edwards' op-ed, but still hasn't gotten past that one word:

Nazis?

"I was shocked a fellow student would just nonchalantly mention the Nazi Party in a list of people included in the American political sphere," Pori says.

Pori still hasn't gotten past one word: Nazis?

A few days later, the St. Olaf admissions office, where Edwards worked, posted an Instagram photo that included Edwards. Pori wrote a comment asking if the school knew of Edwards' writing. The comment was deleted. Pori wrote again, saying St. Olaf was advertising itself to prospective students with the image of a "Nazi sympathizer." This was also deleted.

These "disparaging comments" got Pori kicked out of student government. Edwards continued to complain that Pori was calling him a "Nazi sympathizer" online.

A month later, they happened upon each other in a school building. Edwards was

escorting a guest up the stairs. Pori ascended ahead of them, going slower and slower, blocking their way to the point they were almost not moving. Edwards and his guest finally found space to get past.

St. Olaf ultimately suspended Pori for the online comments, the stairs slow-down, and two other incidents. In an earlier episode, Pori had tried to shut down a Red Cross Blood Drive. (The Red Cross turns away donors who admit homosexual sex, a hold-over from an AIDS-crazed era.) There was also a blocked doorway in the Buntrock Commons during a protest over racial inequalities. The "one common thread," a school administrator wrote, was that Pori had used "inappropriate tactics" to advocate their beliefs.

Pori says discussions with their father, a criminal attorney, reminded Pori that a 6-foot-2 individual could be perceived as threatening, even without intent. But in an eloquent letter back to school administrators, Pori defended the feud with Edwards.

"I would not want to harm [Edwards]," Pori wrote, "because then I would be no better than the vile belief system which I so passionately condemn."

The appeal fell short. Pori was suspended until September 2018, at which date Pori can reapply.

Cosimo Pori and Griffin Edwards are impressive. They're mature, thoughtful, reasoned, well-spoken, unfailingly polite. They thank you for your patience, apologize for carrying on. They bounce between moments of cocksure stubbornness—"I don't do regrets," says Pori; Edwards argues that "monarchs" could be "just as bad" as Nazis—and insightful self-perception.



Mike Mullen

They sound like promising young people, the kind St. Olaf's would be happy to have as alumni.

Only one of them will be. Edwards won't say what he's been up to since graduation, though he's "happy to join the real world, as much as I loved St. Olaf." Pori doesn't plan to return, and is instead applying to schools on the East Coast with hopes of finishing college next year.

Edwards thinks his alma mater was "professional and timely" in resolving a tense situation, and thinks the school recognizes the value of diverse opinions. "Iron sharpens iron," he says.

Pori says the spectrum of tolerable rhetoric ends this side of fascism, and St. Olaf's "blind commitment to free speech" made some students feel unsafe.

Despite all this, the pair have never spoken, though both claim they wish they had.

They also say they learned a lot from their collision—about how big institutions work, about standing up for your principles, about living by your word in a digital age. These lessons will be invaluable. It's just a shame they didn't learn more about each other. **EP**

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BOBBY ROGERS



PHOTOS BY BOBBY ROGERS

THOMAS ABBAN

IS MINNESOTA'S BEST NEW MUSIC ACT

PICKED to CLICK 2017

BY KEITH HARRIS

If you want to know where local music is headed in 2017, this year's list of Picked to Click winners won't tell you a whole lot. And that's a good thing. This is the 27th consecutive year City Pages has asked the people who pay the most attention to Minneapolis and St. Paul music which new and emerging acts they love the most, and the results have maybe never been more diverse. Not only are different genres flourishing right now, but different styles are thriving within those genres.

Now, nothing makes a music journalist's job easier than a big old juicy capital-T Trend, but you'd give yourself a mental hernia straining to discern one of those in our top 10 list. Guitars and drums are pretty much all that the three rock bands here have in common. Each of the three rappers you'll meet on our list has his own

unique style. And the three artists you could lump together as "R&B/soul" are so distinct from one another they make such a category seem meaningless.

And then there's our winner, the unclassifiable Thomas Abban, a cryptic virtuoso who isn't part of anyone's scene. When we held this poll last year, he was still recording his debut album, and few if any of our voters had ever heard of him.

If we've learned anything in the year since we announced the winners of Picked to Click last November—a day we also learned the dire results of a much more significant vote—it's that only fools try to predict the future. In 2017, that uncertainty has mostly been a source of dread, anxiety, and terror. So it's nice to be reminded that yes, sometimes surprises can actually be good.

THIS YEAR'S WINNERS:

1. **Thomas Abban** (64 pts.)
2. **4th Curtis** (48 pts.)
3. **Lady Midnight** (43 pts.)
4. **Dwynell Roland** (42 pts.)
5. **Nick Jordan** (38 pts.)
6. **Sass** (35 pts.)
7. **Blaha** (34 pts.)
8. **Izell Pyramid** (29 pts.)
9. **Student 1** (27 pts.)
10. **Lady Lark** (25 pts.)

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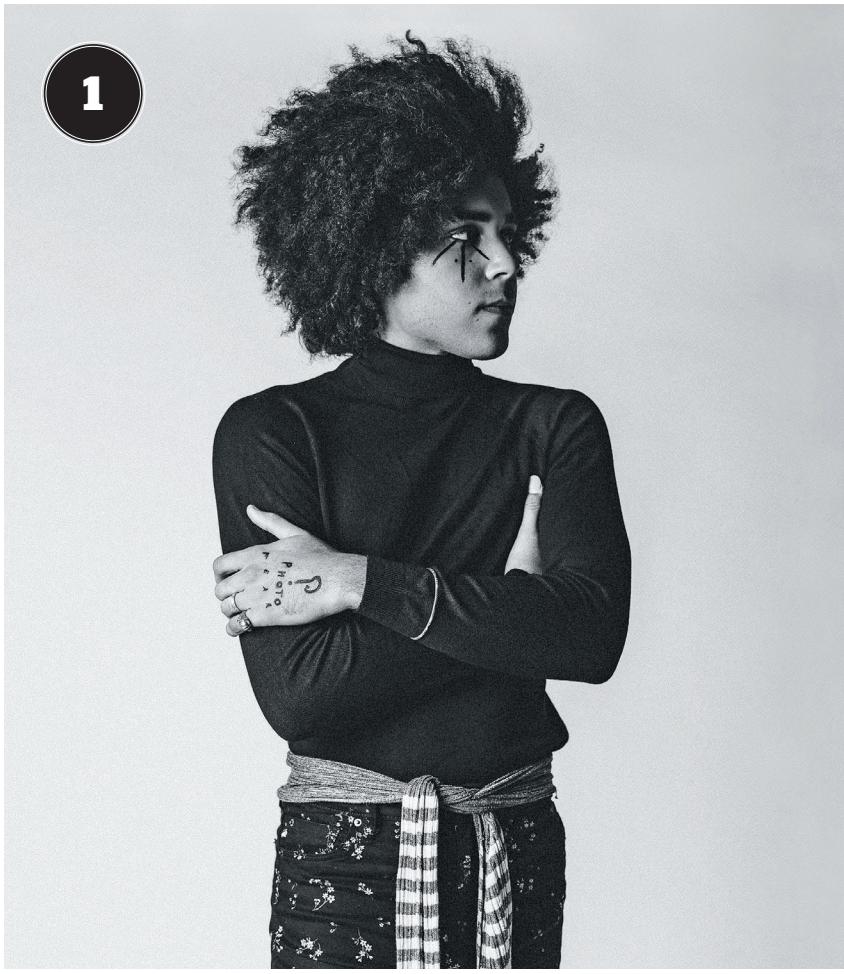
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No. 1: THOMAS ABBAN

BY KEITH HARRIS

Thomas Abban is hard not to notice. The 21-year-old's intricate guitar work and idiosyncratic songwriting are what placed him atop this year's poll. But Abban's visual style, distinctive without being ostentatious, has certainly added to his mystique.

When Abban meets me in the Wayzata studio space where he recorded his 2017 debut, *A Sheik's Legacy*, he wears a roomy white sweater and a single gold leaf earring. His hair is a curly nimbus and, as always, a black star is marked around his right eye. His British upbringing has left him with a hint of an accent. A seasonal cold has left him with a bit of a cough. He's brought a white mask decorated with electrical tape, the one he wears in the video for his song "Black Water." "I've always liked masks," he says.

He doesn't elaborate. He doesn't explain. He sits crosslegged, answers my questions quietly and politely and simply, neither evasive nor effusive.

We're in the home of Jon Herchert, who engineered Abban's album, has championed him at every turn, and sits in for much of our talk, as does his pup Beatrice. The studio is so cozy a space it's easy to forget you're in a refurbished

garage—it's more like the rec room of a teen musician's dreams, decked out with all sorts of instruments yet strewn with old furniture to loaf on in less inspired moments. Like *A Sheik's Legacy* itself, the studio feels private, a place to dream apart from the world outside.

It's a golden fall afternoon, the kind of day when Abban inhabited this studio last year, and would take walks around the quiet neighborhood for relaxation and inspiration. He recorded his album almost entirely on his own, with the exception of cello, horns, and flute, for which he wrote the arrangements. Though he's since formed a band to perform with live, Abban is still more an instructor than a collaborator when it comes to playing with others. "It works best that way," he says.

Abban's family relocated from Wales to Minnesota when he was 12, and by the time he turned 14, he was playing his own material at a St. Paul Dunn Brothers. Musically omnivorous, Abban filtered classical and jazz as well as blues and rock into his playing. "Transferring all those styles to one instrument, to the guitar, helps you process your influences," he says. "If you mix enough things together, you begin to hear your own style."

And the key to developing his individuality as a performer was songwriting. "I realized early on, I can only write in my style," Abban says. "Even when I tried to write something else, my voice was coming

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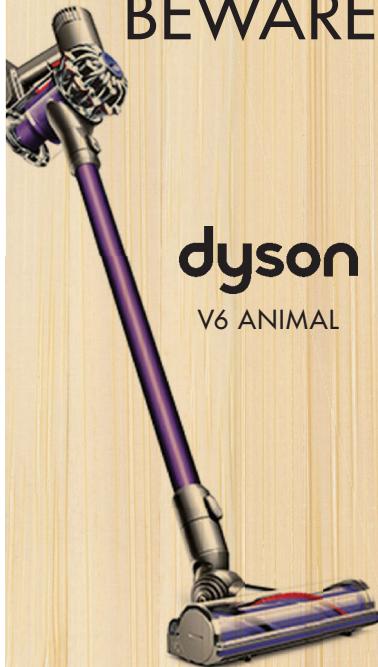
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playful sense of humor, and even their piano ballads kick into high gear, gradually building toward a cacophonous release.

Over the past year, 4th Curtis' calendar was chock-full of gigs in support of the new record, but in the month ahead, the members are taking a breather to weather what they describe as "existential crises and personal epiphanies," and Noens goes to the hospital "to complete a 50-surgery punch card." As Gale puts it, "We want an introspective and sufficiently melodramatic story about self-actualization to share at Hanukkah, at least."

No. 3: LADY MIDNIGHT

BY ERICA RIVERA

At the crossroads of Sade, Portishead, and La Lupe, you'll find Lady Midnight, the seductive, fierce, and soulful astro-pop solo project of Adriana Rimpel.



3

No. 2: 4TH CURTIS

BY AMELIA FOSTER

Iwanted that confident trans-ness to rub off on me," says 4th Curtis founder Lex Noens.

In describing the first meeting between Noens and bandmate Ty Gale, the singer and guitarist has captured the essence of 4th Curtis, a band that has unconditionally embraced trans identity and channelled it into heartfelt indie-pop.

consciously address issues of disability and mental health, adding new urgency to old-fashioned matters of the heart. Across its 10 tracks, the album sidesteps melodrama as it describes numb tongues and crippled limbs. But this sometimes intense subject matter is channelled into sweetly cynical pop choruses, Noens' voice crackling with emotion while intoning lines like "Uhoh, everything's going wrong/ But I haven't felt this good in so long." The video for "Anjali," equal parts strobe lights and muppet sex, perfectly encapsulates 4th Curtis'



NICK FAY

Lady Midnight came about in 2012 when Rimpel and her fellow members in the experimental electronic group Vandaam were searching for an album name. Rimpel suggested "Lady Midnight," but "as we kept saying it I felt like that was more my name," she says. "Lady Midnight fit my mysterious night-owl tendencies more than the name of the album."

In retrospect, a solo project was inevitable. "The collaborations didn't always function very well," she says. "There was albums' worth of work that just never got released. I think that's part of the creative process, too, when you work with somebody. There's never any guarantee that things are going to get finished or that they're going to get released. It's been a long journey to get to this point."

Rimpel has a musical pedigree: Her father was a drummer and her mother a singer in Sabroson, the first Minnesota salsa band. With a photography degree from MCAD, Rimpel was managing teen programs at the Walker in 2010 when a friend encouraged her to audition for local Afro-Cuban outfit Malamanya. She joined the group and soon made the leap to a full-time music career. Now Rimpel teaches songwriting composition and performance to participants aged 16 to 23 at Kulture Klub Collaborative, a nonprofit focused on youth experiencing homelessness.

Last year, Lady Midnight released a three-track EP, *8:40*, with producer Mike the Martyr. The songs, which incorporate sampling and bilingual English-Spanish lyrics, reflect "things that I'm thinking about or things I'm unsettled about," Rimpel says. Her full-length debut is due in spring 2018 from Sound Vérité Records. "I'm excited for people to finally have something substantial, to really see what is the aesthetic and sound of Lady Midnight," she says.

While Lady Midnight's live show includes dancing and avant-garde fashion, Rimpel doesn't want her alter ego to be solely a spectacle. As a descendant of African and indigenous healers, she also

believes music has restorative powers. "Songs are the vibrations of our prayers, our souls, and the expression of our deepest energies," she says.

No. 4: DWYNELL ROLAND

BY MICHAEL MADDEN

No young Minnesota rapper has accomplished more in the past year than Dwynell Roland. Last October, the Minneapolis MC released a nine-song EP, *The Popular Nobody*, on which he deftly handles different production styles (including spaced-out trap and neo-boom-bap) while still carving out a cohesive identity for himself.

One of Roland's guests on the EP is P.O.S., who cameos on "Been Here." That wouldn't be the last time the pair worked together: In January, Roland delivered a standout verse on P.O.S.' epic *Chill, dummy* album cut "Pieces/Ruins," and in March, he opened for the local indie-rap hero during a string of West Coast tour dates. "He cares about me and he cares about what I do," Roland says of P.O.S. "It's not just like, 'All right, we'll do a show and I'll see you whenever.' It was more than I could have ever asked for."

Roland also performed at Rock the Garden in 2017 and scored a sponsorship with the North Loop-based Fulton Beer. But the 25-year-old rapper still works 45- and 50-hour weeks at his day job—recording music and playing shows means a lot of late nights followed by early mornings. Not that he's complaining. "No one else is going to do this for me," he says. "That's why I don't make excuses, like, 'I don't have time for this.' I might as well get it while I can."

Roland is making his crew look good, too. He's one quarter of the Rotation, a collective with rappers Finding Novyon (No. 6 Picked to Click finisher last year)

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and Devon Reason, plus producer and DJ Travis Gorman. A Rotation group record is unlikely to materialize anytime soon, but the collective is set up to thrive on its members' individual successes. "We're just focusing on our solo stuff and just trying to figure out what really can work," Roland says.

Roland is "damn near done" with his next album, but he hasn't committed to a release date and he's reluctant to reveal the album's title. Still he's clearly excited about what he's cooking up, and he's especially stoked for listeners to hear the album's intro and another song, "Control It."

Finding Novyon relocated to L.A. this year to explore more musical opportunities. Assuming Roland's career wins continue to pile up, would he make that kind of move himself? "I feel like I still have a lot of work to do [in Minnesota]; I'm missing just a few things here," he says. "But who knows what could happen?"

No. 5: NICK JORDAN

BY JAY BOLLER

The future doesn't freak Nick Jordan out.

Not only did the 23-year-old R&B artist graduate last year from St. Thomas University, but he acquired a bonus education along the way: a master's in swag from MTV's *Making the Band*.

Jordan and his backup dancers watch the '00s reality show religiously, and even gave a shout-out to professor Puff Daddy via "Bet (Diddy Said)," a dreamy, synth-loaded track off August's *Dividends* EP.

"Diddy—and you can make fun of him—has some really profound statements!" Jordan says, singling out his favorite *Making the Band* mantra: Don't dance in the back. "If I'm gonna be wrong, I'm gonna be strong and wrong—I don't dance in the back."

That confidence isn't misplaced. This very publication named Jordan the best R&B act of 2016. Then, in March, he won the Star Tribune's Are You Local? best-new-band contest. Jordan's victory-lap set at the Turf Club was a joyously choreographed, turnt-up revelation: How could an act so green perform with such supreme showmanship?

"I have a desire to spread light; I have a strong dedication to be true to myself, to actually being it—the real deal, musicianship," says Jordan, who wrangles his own production (with assists from collaborator LukDlx), songwriting, and choreography. "I think when you see me live, the passion is palpable. I don't think you'd ever be like, 'Maybe he should do something else.'"

The seeds of Jordan's kinetic yet emotionally vulnerable music were planted in tiny Delano, Minnesota. That's where he sang Jell-o jingles before he could even talk, according to his hard-working single mom, and where he developed a love for theater and '00s-era radio jams—Brandy, the Neptunes, Jill Scott.

"In terms of being black, queer, and having big dreams about music, you grow up not seeing yourself reflected in anything around you," Jordan says of his exurban childhood. "I have really big dreams—I have international-level dreams."

Armed with a music-biz degree, Jordan maintains a keen awareness of his career arc. He dominated Minnesota's new-music award circuit, though he doesn't want to splash around in our small pond forever. The next step? Constructing a team.

"A one-man army burns out so quickly," Jordan admits. Taking cues from his empire-building TV mentor Diddy, he's currently seeking management, PR, and studio pros to maximize the next album cycle. Dancing in the back is not part of the equation.

"I have a manifestation journal, and I have big dreams," Jordan says. "Typically, when I write them, they come true."

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hope that this will help her be even more honest in her songwriting.

"I talk from my point of view a lot because if I've gained any strength or wisdom from my negative experiences, I can use that to help someone heal faster," Murck says. "During a recent show at the Hexagon, I talked about how I was sexually abused as a child, because I want to write about it someday. For now, admitting that it happened, saying it out loud, and not being

afraid helps other people be less afraid. Then it won't be so hidden."

And Sass has been a way for Murck to become even more involved with the music community that so much of her world revolves around. "Music is the most important thing to me," she says. "I didn't go to college, but I've invested so much in this. I teach guitar, and I work at a music venue and record store. I feel I can connect people and make a difference in the world. It's hard to know how to do that, but music can communicate ideas to so many people."

No. 6: SASS

BY YOUNA VANG

In late 2016 Stephanie Jo Murck, the lead singer of Sass, finally found her own voice—literally and figuratively. A self-taught guitarist, Murck has played in local bands Cherry Cola and Tony Peachka, and the experience of singing lead vocals on a few tracks for the latter stirred up her confidence a bit. She told a few friends she'd been writing her own music; to her surprise, three of them—Joey Hays, Alex McCormick, and Willem Vander Ark—immediately volunteered to play her music. Each of these musicians has made a contribution to Sass's sweet but prickly indie-pop sound, but it's Murck's songwriting that sets the band apart.

Early last month, Sass released *Wet Paint*, a collection of four songs in which Murck's clear, sharp voice ducks and weaves as it navigates the struggles of life. It's an album wracked with self-doubt but also infused with optimism, and Murck's life was the raw material from which she drew her lyrics. Her goal now is to be even more vocal about her personal experience, in the



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No. 7: BLAHA

BY ERIK THOMPSON

You'd think being in one of the best rock bands in the Twin Cities would be enough of a creative outlet for Mike Blaha. But the Blind Shake guitarist/vocalist formed the fiery garage-rock side project Blaha earlier this year while his other band took a breather. Blaha has already put out two full-length albums, two EPs, and a handful of singles, and just returned from a successful East Coast road trip.

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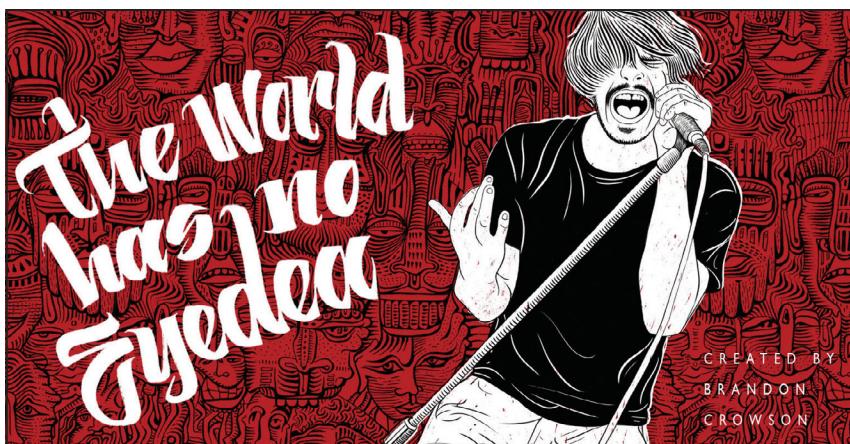
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"The more I write, the more ideas I have for the next song," Blaha says. "My approach is that the current song I'm working on is the true song, the rest were all either failures, colossal failures, or reasonable tracks. But this next song will solve everything!"

Much of Blaha's material started out as experiments on his 8-track reel-to-reel, with Neil Weir at Blue Bell Knoll and Jon Airis at Terminal NYC later helping Mike get the desired depth of sound. Then he enlisted a cracking band to help bring his solo project to life on the road: guitarist Dylan Rosen (France Camp), bassist Allison Gunderson (McVicker), and drummer Noah Paster (Ripper).

"Playing with this group helps me filter through which songs work live and which ones only work with the trickery of the studio," Blaha says.

A music scene veteran who's worked the door at First Ave, the Entry, Turf Club, and Amsterdam, while rocking just about every stage in town in the process, Blaha plays music for the love of it, and that passion comes through every time he performs. As for his current creative streak, Blaha is too humble to say it comes down to inspiration. He's got a far more philosophical take. "Something has changed in my brain recently where I notice that everything equates to frequency," Blaha explains. "Color, people's attitudes, the vibrations of trees when you cut them—it's all frequency."

And that same frequency pulses at the very heart of his combustible but catchy new sound. "I think music is the same as it always was and always will be, because it's just the manipulation of the vibrations of the universe," Blaha says. "Great bands can wash away all the sins of the terrible ones in one night's work. It's like a nice forest fire that clears the way for new growth. Music is not symbolic of nature. It is nature."

No. 8: IZELL PYRAMID

BY JERARD FAGERBERG

He dresses like Zorro and sounds like Frank Ocean.

Maybe the only thing more beguiling about Izell Pyramid than his stage presence is his indecipherable personality. Below the lavish sleep mask and spools of Auto-Tune is a careful, deliberate songwriter and a socially vigilant observer, a Twin Cities music veteran who's striking



JASON LARKIN

out into anonymity for the sake of his art.

"The music is so much bigger than the person I am—I'm just a dude," Pyramid says. "I've been let down by meeting people that I thought were super ethereal, crazy minds, and they ended up being kinda shitty. I never want anyone to have to go through that with me."

What we can tell you about Izell Pyramid is that it's actually a duo—a pair of brothers in their 20s from south Minneapolis. One sings and performs, and the other maneuvers the beats. The rest, for the time being, is hidden from view.

Pyramid's first big splash came on Bobby Raps and Corbin's 2015 EP, *Couch Potato*, where Pyramid took over the vocals on "Blame the Internet." But Pyramid claims most people mistook his subdued croon for Corbin's own. It's an easy mistake to make: Pyramid and Corbin are equally enigmatic, and all three vocalists are students of Ryan Olcott's warbly next stage of the Minneapolis Sound.

"We're all just sad, angry, weird kids," Pyramid says with a chuckle.

Released on September 29 via Olcott's Totally Gross National Product, Pyramid's debut EP, *Priestcraft*, already has over 60,000 listens on Soundcloud, even though the cagey local still hasn't scheduled a show to promote it.

Perhaps that's because a kind of truth emerges from the artifice. There's an elemental humanity to the way Pyramid sings "I want to be free, but you won't let me" on "Running," his voice bursting into a panoply of anguished melodies, that makes you want to strip away all the unnecessary bullshit in your life. It's like an incantation breathed from the throat chakra of a futurist monk.

Before emerging under the pseudonym, Pyramid was a materialistic rapper who



MITCH BLADE

recorded Lil Durk-style joints with Audio Perm. But adopting a shroud of new-age spiritualism has allowed Pyramid to access a truer form of expression. The pyramid is a powerful and divine symbol, and the artist beneath the mythology uses the guise to drive himself closer to a truer expression.

"This is real heart music," Pyramid says. "It's a tough emotional process for me to get in the zone and write songs and stand on stage. The name lets me encompass the whole vibe."

No. 9: STUDENT 1

BY JACK SPENCER

Call Student 1's music "backpack rap" if you want. After all, the Minneapolis MC does wear one strapped over his shoulders onstage.

It's a decent shorthand to describe the young rapper's affinity for wordplay, his open-book self-consciousness, and his primary influences. (He cites Slug and MF Doom specifically, and you can hear hints of Childish Gambino and Chance the Rapper as well.)

But "backpack rap" hardly begins to capture Student 1's open-ended grasp of modern hip-hop. "I want to push limits," he says, waiting in the greenroom of the Whole Music Club just before showtime. "I also want to see how strong words and ideas really are."

The students at the Whole seem visibly unsure of what to expect from the rapper, whose slightly awkward stage presence belies his impressively captivating set. With a soft-spoken swagger, a wry cleverness slyly cloaked beneath a laissez faire demeanor, Student 1 finds a joyous middle ground between honest lyricism and exuberance.

"I don't really have a pattern in my process," he says. "It's usually just me going

with my gut feeling. That approach doesn't really give you a consistent result every time. I do sometimes really have no direction when it comes to writing."

He's just as spontaneous about releasing music. His songs appear online out of nowhere, each with drastically different beats, cadence, and subject matter. "I love dropping just random songs," he says. "That shit's so fun. I can drop a single and listen to how it sounds, and immediately just be like, how do I jump out of this box?"

On Student 1's latest full project, *Dichotomy*, he shares each track with another like-minded MC (including Drelli, Nazeem, and CrashPrez), their styles meeting and bouncing off each other as he raps about everything from weed to helping your mom get to the bus stop.

With every song, Student 1 hopes to move his craft forward—his name reflects his philosophy of continual growth. He says he wants to eventually feel as comfortable performing folk or bluegrass as he does hip-hop, and that open-mindedness is already reflected in his versatile beat selection and fluctuating flow. "If I can hear a distinct difference between what I drop recently and what I drop after that, I'm satisfied," he says.

No. 10: LADY LARK

BY SOLOMON GUSTAVO

Taylor Harris, better known as Lady Lark, sits at the head of a table in a Dinkytown coffee shop, flanked by guitarist Oran Chan and keyboardist Kyle Pleggenkuhle. Her poof of light-brown curly hair, seen on the cover of the Lady Lark EP *Love*, extends forward like a burning halo, each bouncing curl a ray flaring from her bright disposition.

Harris' smooth, slow-burning vocal delivery tempers the simmering pas-

sion and groove on *Love*, a project that's light and fun but still sticks to your ribs and rattles around in your ear long after listening. Harris' presence is much the same—she's soft-spoken and unassuming, but her vivacious energy shines through.

Lady Lark jams are siren calls to the dance floor—not blaring starter pistols, but subtle enticements, as when someone catches your eye in the club, daring you to sexy-dance. "I want to pull you in," says Harris.

Sexy-dancing can feel very silly, but what makes Lady Lark and *Love* so wonderful is that you can't help it. Your embarrassment bubbles up to the top and Harris clears it away like a beer foam scraper.

The music of Lady Lark has traces of funk and soul, with clearly hip-hop-influenced percussion. Harris calls it "cool-pop," and she began constructing her sultry, rich sound when she linked up with Pleggenkuhle, a former co-worker, and his friend Chan. The keyboardist overheard Harris singing and, impressed, asked her to record. Harris was inspired by collaborating with Pleggenkuhle and Chan. "They've helped me find it in myself," says Harris.

Adding to the richness of the Lady Lark sound is a backing band that includes guitar, bass, keys, and drums, and two backup singers. Harris also pitches in on tambourine. ("She kills the tambourine," Chan says as Harris humbly winces.) "It's a nice balance that we have," Harris says. "I don't know if I would have come up with it on my own."

Though Harris, a Minnesotan since the age five, is sweetly modest, she's clearly the leader, the source of Lady Lark's singular vision. Pleggenkuhle and Chan gush about filing behind her, finding their role and enhancing her talent.

In the 11 months since the creation of the band, they've performed 22 times. They plan on releasing a full-length follow-up to *Love* in 2018, with a single dropping sometime around New Year's. □

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Minneapolis restaurants ask: Would you please use gender-neutral language when speaking to the staff?



BY EMILY CASSEL

We hate to have to be the ones to tell you this, but the customer isn't always right.

There was the morning, distracted by a message from the office, that you didn't actually ask for almond milk in your half-caff macchiato. The noisy night out when you misheard your date's drink order and returned to your two-top with a gin drink rather than a rum one. And there was, probably at least once, the time you hazarded a guess at the gender of your server—throwing out a tentative, “Excuse me, miss,” as you tried to track down your check, issuing what you thought was a polite, “Thank you, sir,” as someone slid your beer across the bar—and guessed wrong.

It's why, at Powderhorn's May Day Cafe, a small sign taped to the counter bears a polite request: “The May Day Cafe asks that you use gender-neutral language when

addressing its employees. Thank you.” A similar note, modeled after May Day's, went up next to the cash register at Taco Cat's Midtown Global Market stall in September: “Please use gender-neutral language when addressing our staff. Thanks for being a pal.”

“I think gendered language is pretty integrated in restaurant culture,” says Taco Cat co-owner Tristan Jimerson. “I've been working in restaurants for a long time, and sir-ing and ma'am-ing people, that's just how you're taught.”

For Jimerson, who in interviews asks potential hires their preferred pronouns right after asking their name, it just made sense to extend that same courtesy to customer interactions. Following May Day's lead, the bike delivery taco joint became one of the newest practitioners of this emerging language movement in the service industry.

That movement got its start in the Twin Cities at Cafe SouthSide. More a community gathering hub than just somewhere to

hunker down and suck up the free WiFi, the Powderhorn cafe was a place of radical hospitality, one that actively welcomed LGBTQ+ customers and served as a safe space for trans and non-binary folks. Co-owners Roxanne Anderson and Anna Mayer intentionally created that trans-friendly environment—it was always as connected to their mission as brewing coffee or selling sandwiches.

“It was really important to us, from the very beginning, to make everything—including our application—reflect that in a way that was fair and equitable,” says Anderson, an educator and activist who's worked with organizations including OutFront Minnesota. “One of the very first things that we did was to put, right on the register: ‘This is a trans safe space.’ Elsewhere throughout SouthSide, buttons encouraged guests to ask about pronouns, radical literature lined the walls, and customers held events like “stitch your pronouns” crafting workshops.

And while the cafe is currently closed as its co-owners work to find a more sustainable way to run the business, they're still spreading that message: Anderson now trains others in the restaurant industry to be more trans-inclusive.

Considering a June 2016 study from the Williams Institute found that 1.4 million American adults—roughly 0.6 percent—are transgender, it seems likely that many Minneapolis-St. Paul restaurants have at least one trans person on staff. What's more, given that the Williams Institute findings doubled statistics from just five years prior and didn't factor in other gender-nonconforming or non-binary groups, there are likely plenty more places like Taco Cat, where roughly seven employees aren't cisgender, meaning their gender identity doesn't match the sex they were assigned at birth.

But not every eatery doubles as a community space in the way SouthSide did, and speaking with people whose names

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you don't know is inherent to food service, perhaps more so than in just about any other industry. Lacking a name to use in those interactions, gendered language—both terms of respect (your ma'ms, your misters) and those of friendly familiarity (dude, bro, lady)—becomes a de facto placeholder.

"Working in the service industry, people think they have to gender you to respect you," says Tigger, who works the line at Taco Cat and uses gender-neutral they/them pronouns (and who prefers to be identified by their first name only). This is where the signs come in—they were meant "to broaden the context in which the staff felt comfortable, not just with their co-workers, but with everybody, so they didn't have to repeatedly correct people or feel it was a personal burden they had to bear," explains May Day cook Reema Bazzi.

Reactions have been mixed, but largely positive. A bearded, burly, non-binary Taco Cat staffer named Q uses xie/xem pronouns, and says that before adding the small sign, xie got "duded and bro'd all day." That's stopped, for the most part, and Q's unscientific estimate is that 87 percent of people have been receptive to the message. Some excited customers have taken pictures of it, others have said they wish their restaurant would implement something similar. Those who have had no idea what it means or why a taco joint would ask such a thing of diners have, for the most part, reacted with curiosity or questions, not malice or negativity.

That other 13-ish percent? Well, there have been a few scoffs, and one person who laughed and told Q, "I like your joke." One older customer—and an ever-understanding Q swears this came from a place of ignorance rather than intolerance—gestured to a non-binary cook working behind the counter and asked, "Can you tell it what I want?" This was Jimerson's trepidation

when Taco Cat's sign first went up: that the person working front-of-house would bear the brunt of customer confusion, that the reactions would be negative enough to be more traumatic than comforting for the staff. At May Day, Bazzi explains that the sign has been a quick, easy way to address the topic up front, but theirs is a high-volume cafe, and often, there isn't really time to give thoughtful answers to genuine customer questions. Besides, it isn't easy to be constantly positioned in the role of educator, and Q says xie is still trying to settle on a short, quick pitch for people who want to know more. After all, "They're just trying to get a taco," Q says. "And you're just trying to live your queer life," adds Tigger.

Both Bazzi and the Taco Cat team say they could see this language popping up elsewhere in Minneapolis, though Bazzi acknowledges that south Minneapolis—and in particular, the diverse Powderhorn neighborhood May Day calls home—might have to lead by example. Would Bloomington and Richfield respond the same way? It remains to be seen. All agree that what's important here is the effort, the acknowledgement: trying to honor co-worker and customer pronouns, acting gracefully in the event that you (inevitably) get them wrong as you rewire, going from "you guys" to "you all," from "hey, miss" to "hello, there."

"Even as someone who—I am the thing, I still make mistakes. I still screw up," says Q. Jimerson, too, falters ever so briefly when explaining how the Taco Cat team worked together to draft language for the sign that was in line with their style: "I had these guys—these people," he quickly corrects, "look at it."

But there are no hard feelings following the foible, only peals of laughter from the group. "We're all learning!" Tigger says. "The best thing is just, you catch yourself, you back up, and you do it again." ☐

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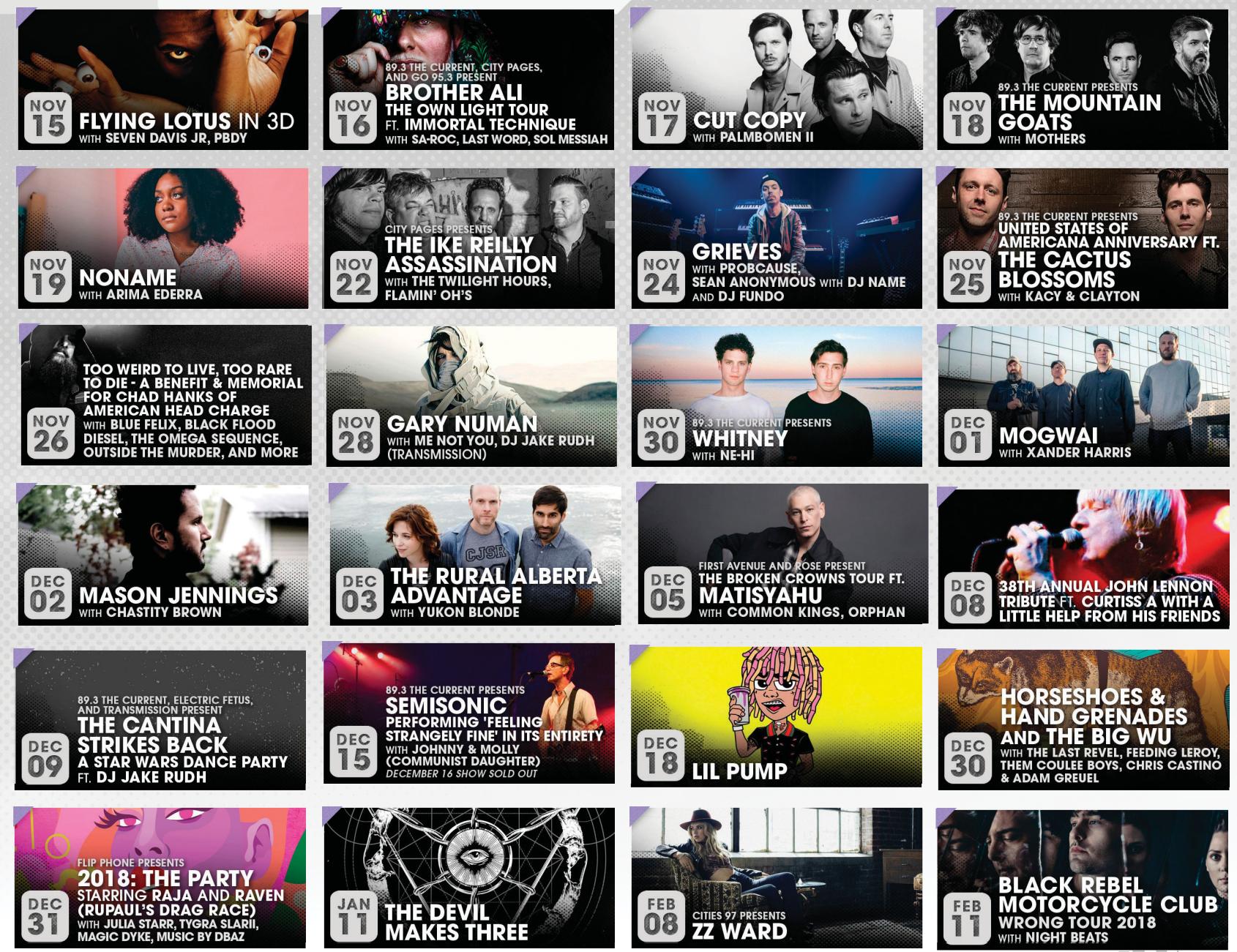
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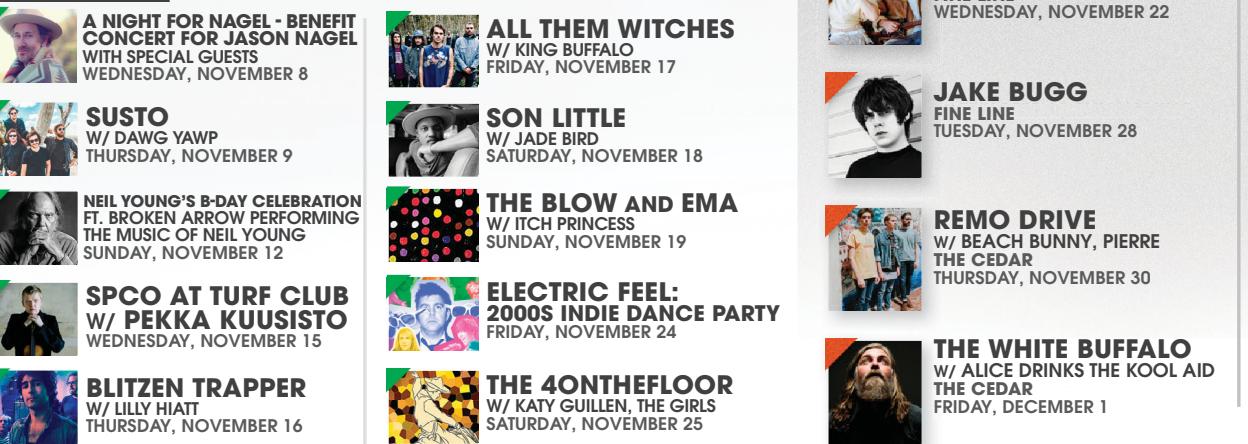
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A LIST

FRIDAY 3D horror films at Parkway **P. 26**

SATURDAY Beer and holiday cheer at Lake Monster **P. 28**

TUESDAY The Guthrie gets Scrooged **P. 29**

WEDNESDAY 11.8

COMEDY

EMO PHILIPS

ACME COMEDY CO.

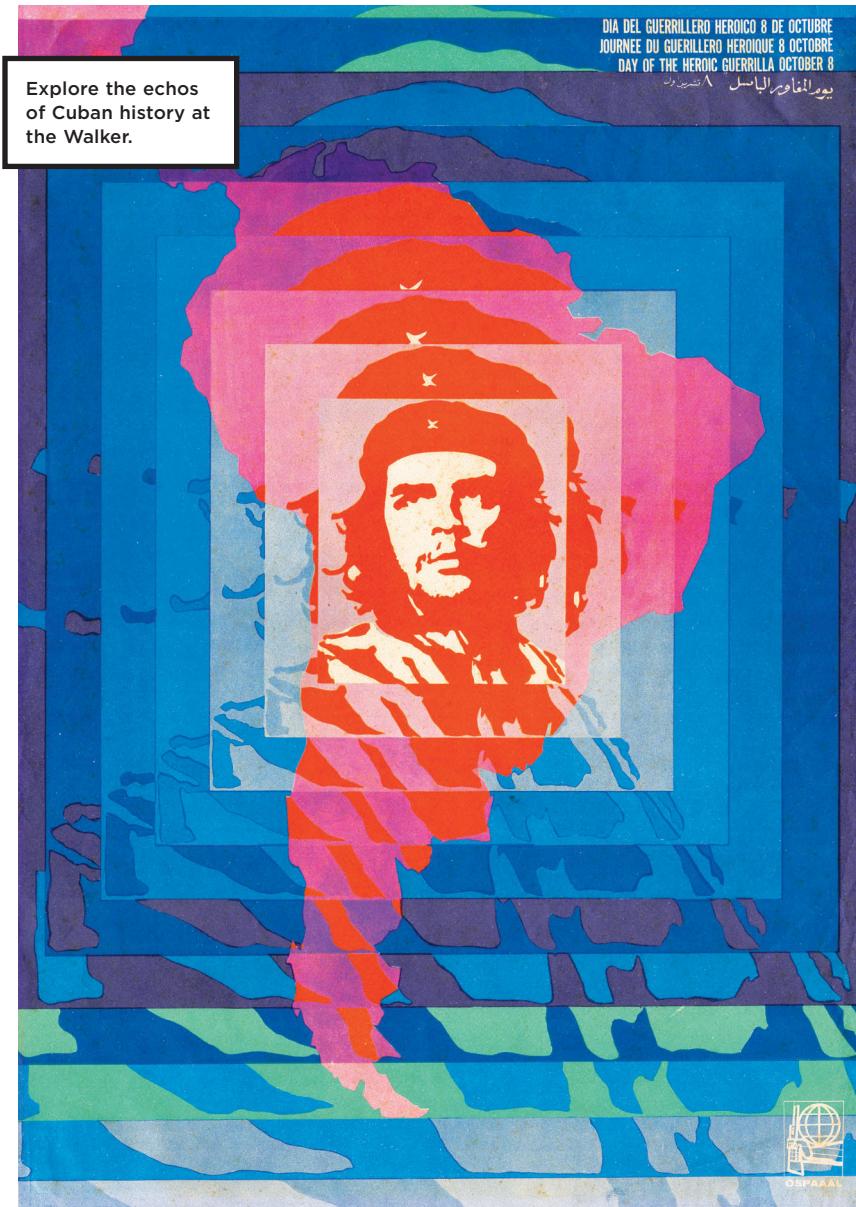
Emo Philips is a comedy icon and one of America's foremost joke writers. It's no surprise that he has trouble picking his favorite joke. "That's like asking a mom, 'What's your favorite kid?' he says. "Obviously, the ones that slip out the easiest." Since his last appearance in town, Phillips was on the series finale of Comedy Central series *@midnight*, and was in a clown show in Los Angeles. "I now and then sing and play woodwinds with my own band, Emo & the Emo-Philials," he adds. Last year, he played a few musical numbers on Jackie Kashian's podcast as part of her interview with two super fans who were following Phillips on tour. Among the things that kept him busy off stage this year was the solar eclipse. "With a clear sky, in a forest near Carbondale," he notes. "I am as rich as any emperor who has ever lived. All I expected was for it to get dark and for the birds to stop chirping. I would have been more than happy with that. I had zero idea of the surprise in store. Here's what a clear-sky eclipse of the sun is like, smack dab in the path of totality: The day turns to night, the birds go quiet, and then, in the heavens, for two minutes, it's exactly as if God is saying to you, 'Hey, want to see the engagement ring that I got my girlfriend?'" 18+. 8 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. 708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393. **Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON**

THEATER

ROLLER DERBY QUEEN

GREMLIN THEATRE

For its inaugural production, SOS Theater stands to generate buzz with a cast of great Twin Cities performers, including Nancy Marvy, Sara Marsh, Carolyn Pool, Raye Birk, and Andy Rocco Kraft. Matt Sciple, an artist with over two and a half decades



HELENA SERRANO, *DÍA DEL GUERRILLERO HEROICO (DAY OF THE HEROIC FIGHTER)*

of stage experience and accolades, directs. Uniting these extremely talented people is an enthusiasm for a breakout script by Michele Lepsche. *Roller Derby Queen* derives humor from the heartache of family dependency. Focusing on the strained bonds between a mother and her daughters, the piece follows Florence Alvine Turchin, a woman whose

compulsion to collect items of dubious worth is making her home borderline uninhabitable for herself and second daughter, Mary Elizabeth. Alas, when eldest daughter Ellen attempts to impose changes, lifelong resentments are soon unleashed. This new work serves as a reminder of just how much local stages (and audiences) stand to benefit from championing bold

and original voices. For tickets, go to www.brownpapertickets.com. 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays, plus Monday, November 20; 3 p.m. Sundays. \$12-\$25. 550 Vandalia St., St. Paul; 651-228-7008. **Through November 26 —BRAD RICHASON**

THURSDAY 11.9

BIKES

JOYFUL RIDERS CLUB: THE TWEED RIDE

SURLY BREWING COMPANY

Each month, the Joyful Riders Club hosts a low-key gathering where folks ride their bikes at a friendly pace, venturing out from Surly and back. The November installment will be super dapper, as cyclists will be encouraged to deck themselves out in tweed, be it a college professor-style coat, a 1900s-era full-on suit, or just a really awesome hat. This ride is for those of all ages and abilities, as leaders Patrick Stephenson and Mario Macaruso will take participants on a chill tour through the neighborhood. Once back at the brewery, everyone will be treated to a free beer or other beverage of their choice. All ages. 6 to 9 p.m. Free. 520 Malcolm Ave. SE, Minneapolis. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

COMEDY

RYAN DALTON

THE JOKE JOINT COMEDY CLUB

"I didn't do the road as much as I did before because when I moved to L.A. I wanted to establish myself," says comedian Ryan Dalton. "When I lived in New York City, my mistake was trying to do the road and be in New York as much as I could, and that doesn't work when you're on the road for a month and a half and then you want to establish yourself and you're only there a week at a time." In Los Angeles, it's been a different story. "My wife and I moved out here," he says. "She's a nurse at UCLA Hospital and that enables me to be able to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 ▶

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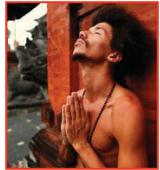
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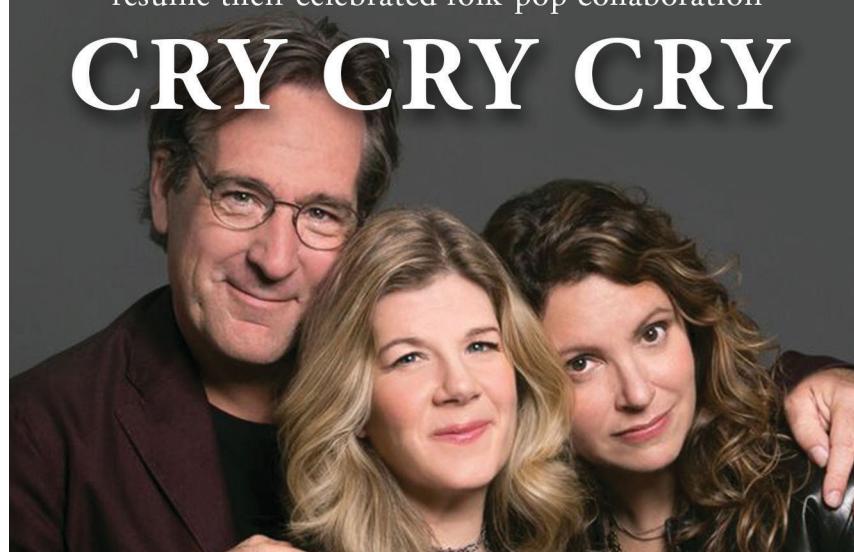
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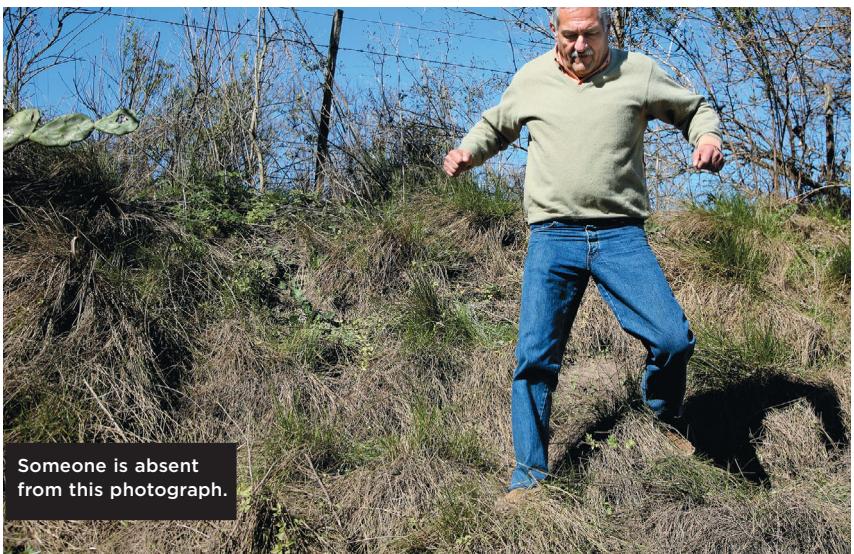
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A-LIST



Someone is absent
from this photograph.

GUSTAVO GERMANO

CONTINUED FROM THURSDAY ▶

stick around here. I produce a show called Comedians You Should Know at the Hollywood Improv and it's a weekly show. We've had some pretty big names that have dropped in, like Adam Sandler, Kyle Kinane, and Tom Segura." The success of that show has allowed Dalton to get back out on the road. "That's how you get better as a comic. You've got to stretch out and get some time under your belt." He's looking forward to his run at the Joke Joint. "Minnesota crowds are really into comedy and excited to have it. I don't know if it's the cold weather or what." 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday; 9:45 p.m. Friday and Saturday. \$14-\$26. 801 Sibley Memorial Hwy., Lilydale; 651-330-9078. **Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON**

FRIDAY 11.10

ART/GALLERY AUSENCIAS/ABSENCES

REGIS CENTER FOR ART

The "disappeared," the people abducted, murdered, and secretly buried during state-sponsored political upheaval, are ever-present in such countries as Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. Absence, when it refers to that evanescent place left violently empty in your family history, is really a sort of invisible presence. Argentinian photographer Gustavo Germano examines this physical and psychological state in this exhibition. He pairs family images taken during dictatorships in South American countries with recreated photographs that capture the members' absence. The resulting lacunae are filled with

curiosity, rage, memory, and grief. There will be a public reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, November 10. Free. 405 21st Ave. S., Quarter Gallery, Minneapolis; 612-625-8096. **Through November 18 —CAMILLE LEFEVRE**

THEATER

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

MIXED BLOOD THEATRE

Mixed Blood Theatre was founded to embrace diverse voices. That includes the voices of the differently abled, as the company demonstrated with last year's production of *Orange*, Aditi Brennan Kapil's play about a teenage girl on the autism spectrum who goes on an overnight odyssey through Southern California. *Curious Incident* is a much higher-profile play: Simon Stephens' Tony-winning adaptation of Mark Haddon's widely read 2003 novel about a boy with autism who sets out to solve the mystery of a neighbor's dog speared to death with a pitchfork. This isn't a chamber piece. The productions in New York and London (and a touring version that came to the Orpheum last winter) relied on sophisticated visual and sound effects that were intentionally overpowering, giving audience members a feeling for how the sensitive Christopher Boone perceives the metropolis he must navigate alone. That will be tricky for a smaller company, but Mixed Blood thrives on challenges like this. (For example, the company brought the twisted puppets of *Avenue Q* to life in 2011.) While director Jack Reuler will have to get creative with his staging, he'll also have the opportunity to highlight some of the relationships in Christopher's life with the kind of

tender performances that can be lost in larger houses. 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays; 2 p.m. Sundays. Free; \$25 guaranteed reservations. 1501 S. Fourth St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6131. **Through December 3 —JAY GABLER**

FILM

3D HORROR AND FANTASY FILM WEEKEND

PARKWAY THEATER

This weekend, the Parkway Theater will screen rare, restored, and just plain weird 3D flicks. Some use new technology, while others have a more dated charm. Things kick off with *Friday the 13th 3D*, in which Jason Voorhees first wears his signature hockey mask. That's followed up with the ultra-rare *Frankenstein's Bloody Terror*. After nearly 50 years missing from archives, the old-school 3D flick has been restored to 35mm. Saturday's trio of films will begin with *Starchaser: The Legend of Orin*, an often overlooked animated work. *Treasure of the Four Crowns* is a bonkers *Indiana Jones* rip-off where things like severed heads, letter openers, and bats fly out at audiences. Meanwhile, *Dynasty* features crazy stunt work and a dude who continues to fight even after someone severs his hands. 7 and 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 4 p.m. Saturday. \$10-\$15; \$35 weekend pass. 4814 Chicago Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-822-3030. **Through Saturday —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

ART/MUSEUM

ADIÓS UTOPIA: DREAMS AND DECEPTIONS IN CUBAN ART SINCE 1950

WALKER ART CENTER

Since Cuban-U.S. relations were relaxed by the Obama administration, myriad organizations as well as individual travelers have been visiting the island nation as curiosity seekers and cultural ambassadors. Adventuring to Cuba today is akin to time travel, with political views, societal conventions, architecture, and infrastructure still stuck largely in the mid-20th century. Many artists and designers who remained in Cuba during this revolutionary epoch found a path toward success while creating in the liminal state between a supposed utopia's construction and deconstruction. This exhibition, curated in part by the Walker's executive director, Olga Viso, the Florida-born daughter of Cuban émigrés, brings the fruits of their labors to us—the first since a 1944 show at MOMA in New York. More than 100 works by more than 50 of these Cuban creatives will be showcased here. Video, installation, and performance pieces, along with paintings, photography, and works of graphic design, are underscored with didactics on key moments in contemporary Cuban history. There will be an After

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 ▶

THEATER

KEEPER OF THE LIGHT

RED EYE THEATER

For *Keeper of the Light*, artist Katie Kaufmann brings the story of lighthouse keeper Ida Lewis to the stage with music, shadow work, and puppetry. Lewis was dubbed "America's Heroine" after her death-defying rescues of sailors off the coast of Newport, Rhode Island, in the middle of the 19th century. She assumed her father's role as a lighthouse keeper at the age of 15, but it took more than 20 years to officially be appointed to the position—and that was after saving many lives. The production features dazzling visuals as it probes into isolation, perseverance, and duty, adding a contemporary feminist perspective to the story.

The piece is directed by Genevieve Bennett, and is performed by an ensemble cast including Mark Benzel, Benjamin Domask, Leif Jurgensen, Kaitlen Osburn, and Kaufmann herself. 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sundays. \$15-\$25 (pay-as-able); \$5 November 12 and 15. 15 W. 14th St., Minneapolis; 612-870-0309. **Through November 19 —SHEILA REGAN**



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A-LIST

ART

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COURTESY OF EVENT ORGANIZERS

As the holidays approach, be sure to put the Fiber Fair on your to-do list. The event, first held in 1956, showcases the craftsmanship of Weavers Guild members, most of whom are from Minnesota. Scarves, shawls, purses, rugs, placemats, and wall hangings are among the unique gifts you can choose from, with 74 percent of each sale going to the artist and the rest benefiting the nonprofit's educational programming. From traditional craftsmanship to innovative contemporary designs, the items at this fair showcase a range of talent from the guild's 560 members. New this year is a sustainable wares section, which focuses on green and eco-friendly goods, fibers, and materials. In addition to the sale, the fair also includes maker talks where shoppers can meet the artists and learn about their techniques. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; noon to 4 p.m. Sunday. Free. 1500 Jackson St. NE, Studio #332, Minneapolis.

Through Sunday —SHEILA REGAN

SATURDAY 11.11

HOLIDAY

MINNESOTA CHRISTMAS MARKET LAKE MONSTER BREWING

Mall season has begun. And while it can be difficult to complete your holiday shopping list without visiting one, breweries around town have been making them easier to avoid with special events where you can check out wares from local artists and grab a pint or two. This weekend, makers and other Minnesota creatives will be at Lake Monster Brewing for an early Christmas market. Pick up some locally inspired pint glasses from Northern Glasses, try a tube of lipstick from StormSister Spatique, and check out some snarky cross stitch from Third Daughter, Restless Daughter. Other items include bath bombs, candles, candy, and faux fur embellishments. 1 to 7 p.m. Free. 550 Vandalia St., St. Paul; 612-964-6288. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

THEATER

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

ORDWAY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Emperor Joseph II proffered one of history's great hot takes when he critiqued an earlier Mozart opera as having "an unconscionable number of notes." The richness of Mozart's compositions and the elaborate layering of music and narrative would in fact become elemental to opera for centuries. There's arguably no greater demonstration of this genius than *The Marriage of Figaro*. This saucy comedy courted controversy with its depiction of the peasant class as both abler and morally superior to the aristocracy—composed by Mozart with his frequent collaborator, librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte, a former priest and serial philanderer who was once kicked out of Venice altogether for "sexual depravity." Luckily, Marie Antoinette vouched for *Figaro*, and the rest is history—a longer history for some than others. The Minnesota Opera stages this classic some 230 years after its debut, here under the direction of Stephen Lawless. 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Tuesday, Thursday through Friday; 2 p.m. Sundays. \$25-\$200. 345 Washington St., St. Paul; 651-224-4222. Through November 19 —BRYAN MILLER

CONTINUED FROM FRIDAY ▶

Hours preview party from 9 p.m. to midnight Friday, November 10, with live music from Charanga Tropical, Malamanya, and DJ Don Cuco. The exhibition is free with museum admission; tickets to the preview party are \$15. 725 Vineland Place, Minneapolis; 612-375-7600. Through March 18, 2018 —CAMILLE LEFEVRE

THEATER

LEILA'S DEATH

GUTHRIE THEATER

A Lebanese woman ululates and undulates, accompanied by a trio of



Leila's Death mourns more than mortal loss.



DOMINIQUE HOUMANT-GOLDO

men, musicians who also dance and interact with her. One of the men is Ali Chahrour, a Lebanese theater artist/choreographer who explores the practice of Islamic Shiite religious ritual through dance and the body. The woman is Leila, a professional mourner paid to sing at funerals in southern Lebanon. She's a solid, iconic presence, seemingly sculpted from the grief she's transcribing through Ataab, a traditional Arabic musical form. Co-sponsored by Walker Art Center and the Guthrie Theater, *Leila's Death* honors a fading cultural heritage through a visceral theatrical work that combines sacred rites, contemporary theater, and global dance. The piece is performed in Arabic with English subtitles. 7:30 p.m. \$30-\$45. 818 S. Second St., Minneapolis; 612-377-2224. —LINDA SHAPIRO

TUESDAY 11.14

READING

MARY RUEFLE

MCNAMARA ALUMNI CENTER

Mary Ruefle's poems are the work of a naturalist who while stopping to smell the roses takes careful notes on the stamens and pistils. She's an abstract fabulist whose caprices can both satirize and enrich an undergirding melancholy. "I feed my sorrow," begins one poem inauspiciously. A few lines later she's feeding her sorrow blueberries and buying it batteries, and by the end we've passed through an obliquely wise, gently funny meditation. Ruefle also writes essays of various sorts, most famously in *Madness, Rack, and Honey*, a collection culled from lectures presented to poetry grad students. Learned but not scholarly, these pieces are full of provocative and useful bits of poetics, metaphysics, smartly chosen quotations, and dubious ideas colorfully expressed. She has also

produced erasure-derived works such as *A Little White Shadow*, a little-known 19th-century book largely whited out to reveal elliptical miniatures. 7 p.m. Free. 200 Oak St. SE, Minneapolis; 612-624-9831. —DYLAN HICKS

HOLIDAY/THEATER

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

GUTHRIE THEATER

Being one of the longest-running yuletide traditions on Twin Cities stages, the Guthrie Theater's annual production of *A Christmas Carol* will always be challenged to preserve enough familiar aspects to appease longtime fans while simultaneously revising enough elements to keep the show feeling fresh. Remarkably enough, even as the Guthrie embarks on the show's 43rd production, *A Christmas Carol* remains the definitive standard of holiday theater. Much of the Guthrie's success can be attributed to the energetic reworking of the adaptations, including the current text by British playwright Crispin Whittell, which brings a spirited energy to Dickens' tale of Ebenezer Scrooge. Sumptuously designed, the immersive journey into Scrooge's past, present, and future also stands to benefit from the assured direction of the Guthrie's associate producer, Lauren Keating. Reprising the central role of Scrooge will be Nathaniel Fuller, a charismatic performer whose affinity for the work developed through his prior portrayals of virtually every character in the play. Audiences at select performances will be treated to another distinctive Scrooge courtesy of acclaimed Guthrie vet Charity Jones. The show is in previews November 14-17, 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays; 1 and 7 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. \$29-\$134; \$15-\$65 previews. 818 S. Second St., Minneapolis; 612-377-2224. **Through December 30** —BRAD RICHASON

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JEFF DAYTON
LIVE MUSIC: 9:30PM - CLOSE

SAT
NOV 11

DJ ESPADA
10PM - CLOSE

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GOD OF JOKES

Marvel's latest, *Thor: Ragnarok*, plays for laughs—and gets them



COURTESY OF MARVEL STUDIOS

BY TONY LIBERA

With apologies to the land of the Vikings: Thor is hands down the most boring Avenger.

He's practically invincible, so the stakes are never all that high. His only real weakness is pride, which can be used as a plot point once before it becomes annoying. Thor is a relic from a different time, a superhero without nuance, and that makes for boring solo outings.

So after two meh Thor movies, how do you fix the god of thunder?

Make him funny.

Marvel has used Thor as comic relief in varying capacities over the course of its cinematic universe, but with *Thor: Ragnarok* the studio really leaned in. They hired Taika Waititi, a director known for oddball comedies like *What We Do in the Shadows* and *Hunt for the*

Wilderpeople, and adapted the Planet Hulk comics storyline to shift some emphasis away from the stuffiness of Norse mythology. The result is a Thor movie that's actually fun to watch.

Ragnarok feels different from the get-go. Thor (Chris Hemsworth) has allowed himself to be captured by the fire demon Surtur, as a means to defeat the monster and prevent Ragnarok, the prophesied destruction of Asgard. Whereas Thor of the past films would have charged in with macho gusto, our hero now chats up a skeleton in his cell, cracks jokes when face-to-face with Surtur, and subsequently does battle with an evil horde while Led Zeppelin's "Immigrant Song" blasts from the theater speakers. This is a complete 180.

From here, *Ragnarok* operates on two converging storylines. Hela (Cate Blanchett), goddess of death and Thor's older sister, attacks Thor and his adop-

tive brother, Loki (Tom Hiddleston), in an attempt to take the Asgardian throne. Loki calls down the Bifrost Bridge in an attempt to flee, but the brothers are knocked from the portal and end up on a planet called Sakaar. Thor is captured and forced to compete in gladiatorial combat. While Hela wreaks havoc on Asgard, Thor must figure out an escape.

Blanchett does a fine job as always, but she's just another in a long line of megalomaniacs. This storyline—all-powerful bad guy hell-bent on taking over the world—is the same old stuff from Marvel. We get a reprieve, however, during Thor's time on Sakaar. Here, *Ragnarok* skirts its villain problem for a bit and trades the stale elements of the Asgardian epic for '80s space opera vibes. Something about Thor flying around in spaceships and using laser guns just makes the character feel fresher.

Hemsworth gets to flex his comedic

THOR: RAGNORAK
directed by Taika Waititi
now open, area theaters

muscles more than ever before, and shows a real knack for it here. Hulk's (Mark Ruffalo) appearance on Sakaar allows for more complicated chemistry between the two one-upping Avengers. And Jeff Goldblum lends trademark Goldblumian weirdness to minor villain the Grandmaster, a goofball sadist who runs the planet. As such, the second act stands out as more like *Spider-Man: Homecoming* than anything found in *Thor*.

Comic-book purists might not like the direction, but it's a welcome change for the rest of us. Thor may always be the lamest of the Avengers, but Waititi and company made fine lemonade out of this Asgardian lemon. **EP**

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ADIÓS UTOPIA

Adiós Utopia: Dreams and Deceptions in Cuban Art Since 1950 is a project conceived by the Cisneros Fontanals Fundación Para Las Artes (CIFO Europa) and the Cisneros Fontanals Arts Foundation, CIFO USA; and curated by Gerardo Mosquera, René Francisco Rodríguez, and Elsa Vega. The exhibition is organized in partnership with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

The exhibition is made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor.



Major support for the exhibition is provided by the Ford Foundation, the Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation, and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional generous support is provided by Ella Fontanals-Cisneros.

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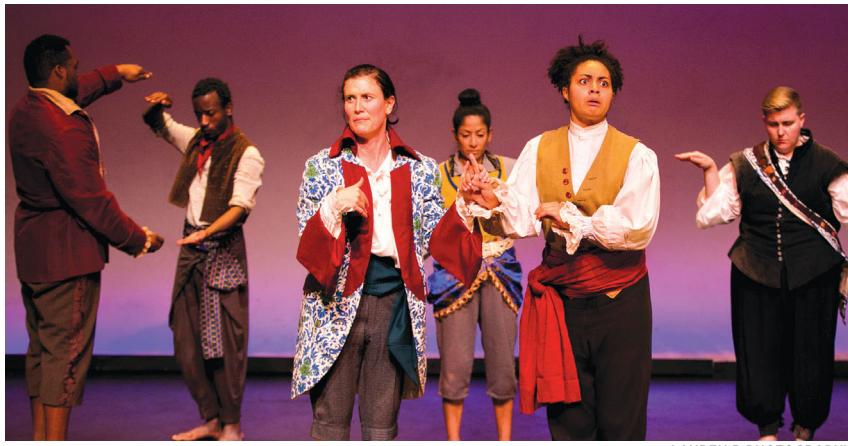
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CITY PAGES

LOST AT SEA

TLA presents piracy in the hands of a Trump-like fool



LAUREN B PHOTOGRAPHY

BY JAY GABELER

Transatlantic Love Affair's new show, now playing at Illusion Theater, is set on the high seas circa 1717. If you were hoping *The Privateer* would supply some good old-fashioned swashbuckling action to help you take your mind off today's headlines, though, sorry: This fictional story of an inexperienced sea captain who gets in way over his head turns out to bear some very pointed similarities to the terrifyingly true story of the man presently steering our ship of state.

Director Derek Lee Miller was also inspired, he explains in a program note, by the real-life Stede Bonnet, a "vain, oblivious, incompetent rich man who decided to become a pirate." Bonnet became the basis for the character of Captain Bevington (Heather Bunch), a shady businessman who buys a ship and convinces its crew to join him on what they hope will be a quick and uneventful foray to the Bahamas.

Bevington isn't properly a pirate, he tells the crew: He's a privateer, a man given official permission to engage in maritime warfare. At first, the (not technically) piracy seems to go pretty well, as the crew luck into an unexpectedly easy conquest. Things get more complicated, though, when Bevington cuts a deal with a real pirate who goes by the apt name of Blackbeard (Allison Witham). This duplicitous schemer's real name isn't Putin, though it might as well be.

The Privateer is a more broadly comedic play than the typical Transatlantic Love Affair offering, and it's rich in character-

THE PRIVATEER

Illusion Theater
528 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis
612-339-4944; through November 18

driven humor. Bunch's broad style is a perfect fit for the buffoonish Bevington, who contrasts not only with the tough and savvy Blackbeard but also with an experienced, loyal sailor (John Stephens) who comes to regret advising his peers to cast their lots with the dangerously inept ship owner. The company's best catch, though, is the effortlessly expressive China Brickey, whose warm and detailed portrayal of Bevington's right-hand man is key to the story's ultimate poignancy.

Are there rousing sea chantneys to be heard along the way? Is the Atlantic wet? Live instrumental accompaniment is provided by Dustin Tessier, who shakes a surprisingly wide range of sounds out of a drum kit stationed at stage right. In the company's trademark set-less style of physical theater, the sea battles can be a little challenging to follow, but fight choreographer Annie Enneking helps ensure that the close combat feels visceral.

While the play feels thematically close to home, it also evokes a sense of escape. For all the dastardly intrigue and hair-raising confrontations, the best moments in *The Privateer* come during quiet conversations between pairs of characters, as subtle cues create a sense of a gently rocking ship against the expansive sky, illuminated by lighting designer Michael Wangen. A red sky at night is a sailor's delight—and ours. **CP**

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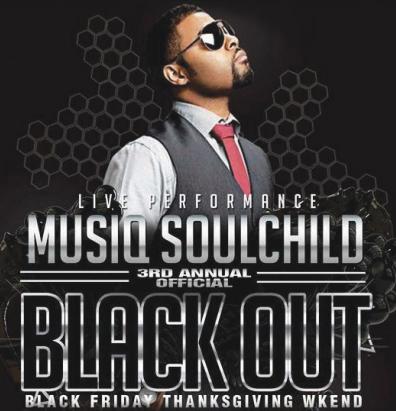
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11/17 - "Heart Has It's Seasons" - A Grateful Dead Tribute
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STREET Style

STRIKE A POSE Teen Vogue Meetup on October 27 at the Mall of America. **BY AMY GEE**



JENNY O

34, TREND FORECASTER

What are you wearing?

Zara jacket, leopard pants from Target, earrings from Urban Outfitters, jewelry is a mix of vintage and Etsy pieces.

Describe your style:

Modern version of '70s rock.

Favorite places to shop?

Zara, Urban Outfitters, and vintage.

Trend you're currently obsessed with?

Cropped flare pants.

TAYLOR BENHAM

18, STUDENT

What are you wearing?

Gingham top from Anthropologie, jeans from Urban Outfitters, Steve Madden boots.

Describe your style:

Girly but chic. I really like obnoxious colors, patterns, and accessories.

Favorite places to shop?

Urban Outfitters, Zara, UNIF, I.AM.GIA.

Trend you're currently obsessed with?

Corset tops and denim on denim.

MARIA FUTCH

25, FASHION DESIGNER

What are you wearing?

Cashmere jacket with fox fur, Topshop cardigan and jeans, Brandy Melville top, Shoedazzle shoes.

Describe your style:

Eccentric, outgoing, playful, and edgy.

Favorite places to shop?

Topshop, Zara, River Island, Anthropologie.

Trend you're currently obsessed with?

Layers.

NYAKIM GATWECH

24, MODEL

What are you wearing?

Top and pants from Fashion Nova, Michael Kors bag, Fossil watch and jewelry, H&M earrings.

Describe your style:

Fun, glamorous, exciting, colorful, exotic, stylish.

Favorite places to shop?

Zara, Fashion Nova, Express.

Trend you're currently obsessed with?

Ripped jeans and denim jackets.

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LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

ROY WILKINS AUDITORIUM,
THURSDAY 11.9

Led by James Murphy, LCD Soundsystem first made waves in 2002 with the witty, self-deprecating "Losing My Edge." The band's excellent self-titled debut album arrived three years later, establishing LCD as a supremely smart and cool yet easily accessible dance-rock outfit. As clever and inventive as Murphy and company are, many of their best songs are as earnest as they are danceable, from "All My Friends" in 2007 to "All I Want" and "I Can Change" in 2010. LCD disbanded within a year of the release of 2010's *This Is Happening*, but two years ago, reports began circulating that LCD Soundsystem were mapping out a reunion. They released a holiday single called "Christmas Will Break Your Heart" at the end of 2015, and they began playing shows again in March 2016. Now they're back in full swing. Released at the top of September, the fourth proper LCD album, *American Dream*, features the superb singles "Call the Police" and "Tonite." 7 p.m. \$54.25. 175 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul; 651-265-4800. —MICHAEL MADDEN

KAMASI WASHINGTON

FIRST AVENUE, THURSDAY 11.9

This might be the single most anticipated jazz show to come through the Twin Cities this year. There's an increasing sense that Los Angeles bandleader and saxophonist Kamasi Washington is a special case—you're clearly doing something right when serious jazz critics are calling you a modern-day Coltrane. Performing with Snoop Dogg and Raphael Saadiq earlier in his career kept Washington busy but unable to truly flourish until 2015, when he exploded to a new realm of renown. Two months after his noted contributions to Kendrick Lamar's dizzyingly ambitious conscious-rap opus *To Pimp a Butterfly*, Washington released *The Epic*, a deeply spiritual three-hour odyssey. Washington's virtuosic playing dazzles throughout, bolstered by powerful soul singing from Patrice Quinn and liquid electric bass from Thundercat. Outside of his own music, Washington's services continue to be in demand, as he played on *Run the Jewels 3* and Lamar's *Damn*. The 36-year-old recently released a new EP called *Harmony of Difference*. 18+. 7 p.m. \$30-\$35. 701 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8388. —MICHAEL MADDEN

JON PARDI

MYTH, FRIDAY 11.10

Nashville-via-California transplant Jon Pardi first established his neotraditionalist style with the singles "Missin' You Crazy" and "Up All Night" and the debut album they later appeared on, 2014's *Write You a*

Song: California Sunrise, the second album from the 32-year-old singer and guitarist, was one of last year's clearest country breakthroughs, epitomizing Nashville's immaculate team-songwriting craftsmanship and confirming Pardi as a guitar hero in the making. Though the album doesn't break any new ground, it nevertheless feels distinctly modern and vital, recorded live in the studio with a full band that includes ubiquitous session man Danny Rader. Pardi and co. captured that magic most potently on the sizzling, raucous mega-hit "Dirt on My Boots," but it's a remarkably consistent record, suggesting that Pardi will be at or near country music's forefront for years to come. With Midland and Runaway June. 8 p.m. \$65.50-\$103. 3090 Southlawn Dr., Maplewood; 651-779-6984. —MICHAEL MADDEN

TED LEO AND THE PHARMACISTS

TRIPLE ROCK SOCIAL CLUB,
SATURDAY 11.11

Indie-punk lifer Ted Leo and his backing band the Pharmacists released a handful of cult-classic albums between 1999 and 2010, and now they're touring together for the first time since 2011. September's self-released, Kickstarter-funded *The Hanged Man*, Leo's first album since he and Aimee Mann released a self-titled LP as the Both in 2014, is credited to just Leo, though Pharmacists drummer Chris Wilson also contributes. On the expansive, ruminative album Leo successfully experiments with different styles, such as Motown soul, and sings courageously about personal subjects including the tragic late-term miscarriage he and his wife went through in 2011. But while the album is, in some respects, Leo as we've never heard him before, he's in a familiarly urgent and punchy mode on some of its highlights, including the fist-pumping power-poppers "Run to the City" and "You're Like Me." With Ian Sweet. 9 p.m. \$18-\$20. 629 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-333-7399. —MICHAEL MADDEN

IBEYI

FINE LINE MUSIC CAFE, SATURDAY 11.11

Ibeiyi is a derivation of the Yoruban word for twins, which Franco-Cubans Naomi and Lisa-Kaindé Diaz are. Their stunning 2015 debut mingled Afro-Cuban, Yoruban, European electro-soul, jazz, hip-hop, and classical, and the sisters' harmonies invoked Santerian orishas while reflecting on heritage and family, including their late father, Buena Vista Social Club conguero Angá Diaz. On this year's *Ash*, the blend is sleeker and trickier, with intricate vocal choruses punctuated by bata drums, sometimes edged with dissonance or elegantly spare. The songs address spiritual and emotional resolve to confront the evils of these Trumpian times

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10pm : scoundrel spence, genreal,
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mon : november 13
8pm : the roe family singers

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with resilience, resistance, and retention of the high moral ground. "We Are Deathless" is their response to racial profiling, while Kamasi Washington's saxophone slinks about conspiratorially. "No Man Is Big Enough for My Arms" is woven around empowering excerpts from Michelle Obama speeches. And the solemn, riveting centerpiece, "Transmission/Michaelion," offers strength and hope: "We sing and our tears dry." Chicago R&B singer/producer theMIND (aka Zarif Wilder) opens. 18+, 9 p.m. \$22-\$35. 318 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8100. —RICK MASON

JESSICA LEA MAYFIELD

7TH ST ENTRY, SATURDAY 11.11

Sorry Is Gone, Jessica Lea Mayfield's fourth solo album, is packed with angst, uncertainty, anger, pain, resentment, and (despite the title) remorse. The singer-songwriter sorts through the messy pieces of her dissolving, abusive marriage, an often grim exercise she's called "taking my life back" that ultimately proves cathartic. Mayfield wades through raw, shockingly detailed confessional ("Can they hear us white trash fighting?") while discovering fresh confidence through self-reliance ("I'm OK with being alone/So over feeling sorry for myself"), and she finds an expressive middle ground between her country and indie-rock inclinations. "Bum Me Out" trifles with punkish miasma, her drawl as anguished as her body. On the only acoustic tune, "Safe 2 Connect 2," her robotic monotone pleads for advice on how to feel more human. "Meadow" is noirish country-pop, while "Offa My Hands" is a jangly country-rocker with wicked hooks and sufficient buoyancy for Mayfield to shake off despair. Nashville's Blank Range, whose rangy rock 'n' roll mixes up blues, country-rock, and psychedelia, open. 18+. 8 p.m. \$15. 701 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8388. —RICK MASON



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Daddy Files

My wife has a “Daddy” relationship with another man

I’m a 40-year-old bi man. I’ve been with my 33-year-old bi wife for three years and married for one. When we first met, she made it clear that she was in a long-term “Daddy” relationship with an older man. I figured out six months later that her “Daddy” was her boss and business partner. He is married, and his wife does not know. I struggled with their relationship, since I identify as open but not poly. Eight months later, she ended things with him because it was “logically right” for us (her words). But she cheated with him four times over the course of two years. In all other aspects, our relationship is the greatest one I’ve ever had. I do not doubt her love for me. My wife has met her biological father only a couple of times and her stepfather died when she was 16—the same year she went to work for her “Daddy.” Their non-work relationship started 10 years later, when she was 26. It’s a complex relationship, and he is not going anywhere, as they now own a business together. While I don’t think cheating has to be a relationship-ender, dishonesty always has been for me. The final complication: I have a cuckold fetish. I believe it might be possible to meet everyone’s needs, so long as everyone is honest. In the heat of passion, my wife and I have talked about her having “two daddies.” Do I consider allowing this, so long as everyone is honest? Is mixing business and personal matters going to blow up in our faces? Do I ignore the part of my brain that wants this guy’s wife to know?

DISTRESSED ABOUT DECEITFUL DYNAMICS INVOLVING ENTANGLED SPOUSE

You don’t need my permission to consider this arrangement—allowing the wife to have two daddies—because you’re clearly already considering it. (You’ve moved on to the bargaining and/or writing-letters-to-sex-advice-columnists stage of consideration, the final stage before acceptance.) What you want, DADDIES, is my permission to do this, not just to think about it. Permission granted. Could it all come to shit? Anything and everything could come to shit. But your wife has been fucking this guy the entire time you’ve been together, and you nevertheless regard this relationship as the



Dan Savage

greatest one you’ve ever had. It stands to reason that if things were great when she was honest with you and remained great despite being dishonest with you, you three are in a good position to make this work now that everything is out in the open.

As for your other concerns: Most of the poly people I know started out as either monogamous or “open but not poly” (people evolve), we find out about secret workplace romances only when they blow up (skewed samples make for skewed perceptions), and you need more info about the other man’s wife before you issue an ultimatum (their marriage could be companionate, they could have agreed to a DADT arrangement regarding affairs, etc.). But again, DADDIES, what you’re basically asking is if something that seems to be working in practice might actually work in practice. And I’m thinking it could.

I have a sugar baby who is a mature post-op trans woman. She is very attractive but also very high maintenance. (She has OCD.) I pay her \$300 per anal sex event; I help with bills, food, etc.; and I spend every weekend with her. I probably spend \$15,000 a year on her. I’m happy most of the time (the sex is great), but does this arrangement sound fair?

DADDY ASKING DAN

Divide the money you’re spending annually (\$15,000) by the number of weeks in the year (52), DAD, and your anal-sex-event-packed weekends are only costing you \$288.46 a pop. Seeing as most sex workers charge 10 to 20 times as much for a full weekend, I’d say you aren’t spending too much. (If this arrangement is unfair to anyone, DAD, it’s unfair to your sugar baby.) But if you’re pulling in only 30K a year, spending half your pre-tax wages on a sugar baby is unsustainable. But if that 15K represents a small percentage of your annual income, DAD, you should give your sugar baby a raise.

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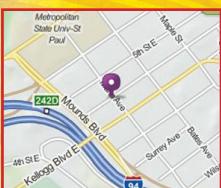
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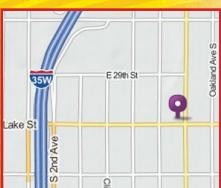
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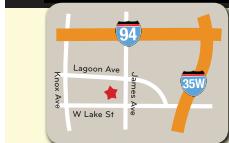
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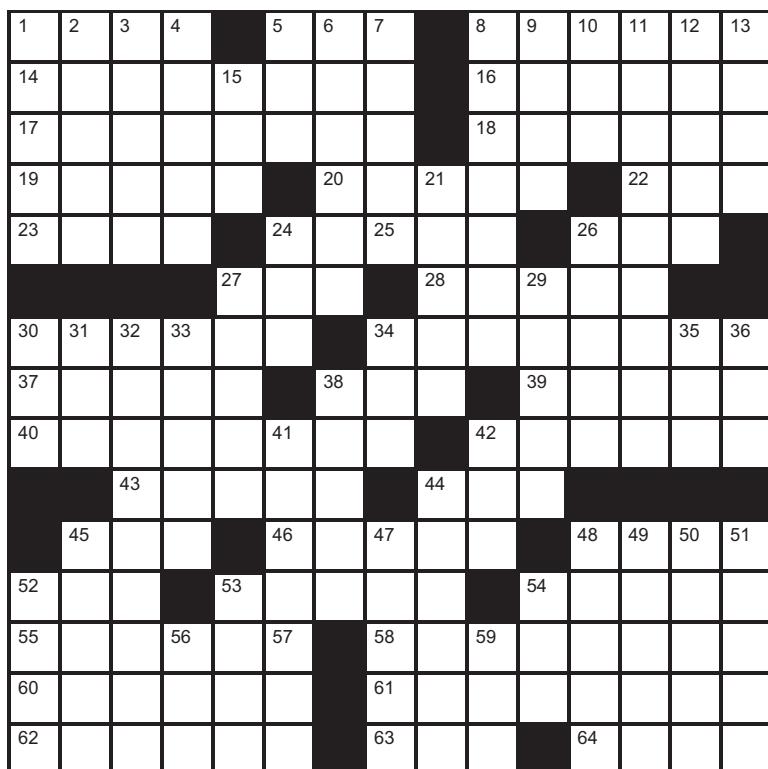
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WE HAVE ACHIEVED PEAK PUZZLE

BY BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

ACROSS

- Time in the tub
- Feel funky
- Some online admins
- Double entendre
- Like some grins
- Attack verbally
- Blast onto, as the scene
- "It takes all ____"
- Threw a curve
- Corner key
- Afterthoughts
- Equal, to Etienne
- Brit. title of respect
- Some grunts
- Guiding belief
- Hits gently, as a window
- Apse spot
- Hip-hopper's headgear
- "Yo, dude," formally
- Do another soundtrack
- Powder-covered footwear
- Meals where four questions are asked
- Tigger's creator
- Crematorium holder
- Get on the list
- Band whose second letter is usually written backward
- A-Rod's babe
- ____ Duke (Hunter S. Thompson's alter ego)
- Saginaw Bay lake
- "Time to act!"
- Like some pans
- ____ Green, Scotland
- Five-star
- Glide nonchalantly
- When Arbor Day is observed: Abbr.
- Takes in
- Former Alaskan capital
- "There's ____ every crowd"
- Chess champion Viswanathan ____
- Middle East people
- Singer Lee ____ Womack
- They're read at carousels
- "Toora ____..." (Irish lullaby syllables)
- City grid lines
- "____ be surprised"
- "We're drowning"
- Rebuttal's position
- Jam band from Vermont
- Match up, as Dropbox files
- hein cooler
- Certain in one's mind
- "Das Schicksal ist ____ mieser Verrater" ("The Fault in our Stars" in German)
- Sank, as a putt
- "Dead Souls" novelist Nikolai
- One picking a new 401(k) plan, likely
- Bill passing achievements?: Abbr.
- Just the best
- Early spring blooms
- Polio vaccine creator
- They've got double the chances of getting a date on Saturday, briefly
- Snarling dog
- Planks work them
- Court writer
- With two outs to go
- Sun
- Computer programming iteration
- Michelob brew
- Half-pints
- vroom.com stock
- Scotch-____ (scouring pad)
- Lawn ball game
- Egyptian crosses
- Irish dances
- Gossipmonger Barrett
- Evine rival
- Big degree
- "The Big Listen" network

PEAK

- Puzzle
- Puzzle
- Puzzle
- Puzzle

Last Week's Answer



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